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## Playing with fire

It has been known for a long time that the Washington Post would publish almost any sensitive national security information it could get its hands on, especially if it proved embarrassing to President Reagan. That suspicion has been confirmed. Last week, the Post obtained highly-classified data on an alleged CIA plan to destabilize the Libyan government and perhaps cause the downfall of its anti-American dictator, Col. Moammar Khadafy.

Publication of the story brought expressions of outrage from many quarters, including three Oklahoma legislators, Sens. David Boren and Don Nickles and U.S. Rep. Dave McCurdy, a member of the House Intelligence Committee.

The Post deserves condemnation for publishing the article, but it is not the only villain in this real-life drama. Somebody high in government (or staff personnel) who dislikes the President or his foreign policies, had to be an accomplice.

Publication of the story was so alarming that the White House ordered an investigation to discover who in government leaked the information. We wish our leaders the best of luck, but persons who commit subversion use every thread in the law to protect themselves. And news people seldom tell.

This is no ordinary flap. The possibility of repercussions are enormous, including a Khadafy-directed terrorist attack on the President. Nobody doubts his capacity for revenge. Some still insist the assassination of President Kennedy in 1963 resulted from an alleged CIA plot to kill Castro.

When all the efforts to uncover the supplier of this data to the Post have produced little meaningful results, the White House might try offering a huge reward for such disclosure, as it offered recently for information concerning terrorists. Philosophical or media loyalty might yield to the kind of greed that converts American citizens into Soviet spies.